A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, June 28. 1707.

I Gave you in my laſt the true State of the Caſe of *Scotland*, about the Uſe of the Lords Prayer in their publick Worſhip, with an Account how they neither practiſe, nor yet reject the Uſe of it as a Form, and ſubjoyn'd my Authorities for it, which I hope are ſatisfactory: I come now to our *Weſt* Country Parſon, who ſays, *they leave out the fifth Petition of the Lords Prayer, becauſe they will not forgive their Epiſcopal Brethren.*

This worthy Gentleman will find it very hard to prove they leave out the fifth Petition only, when 'tis evident that as a Form, they, generally ſpeaking, omit the whole, and very rarely uſe it at all.

But as to thoſe who have us'd it at all, or have us'd it as before, they conſiſt of two Sorts; either thoſe Miniſters, who, according to the Recomendation of the Aſſembly, us'd it to convince their Enemies, that they did not wholly reject it as a Form, and ſo us'd it occaſionally; and theſe could not be ſuppoſed to leave out any Part of it, ſince that would not have anſwer'd the End, nor have at all convinc'd their Adverſaries of their not rejecting it as a Form, ſince they had invaded the Form, and alter'd it by Omiſſions.

The others, who ſtill uſe it conſtantly, cannot be mean't by this Accuſer, ſince they are ſo far from not forgiving their Epiſcopal Brethren, that they are, for the moſt Part of them, if not all of them, ſuch as are profeſſly Epiſcopal themſelves, or at leaſt Friends to them; and theſe therefore cannot be the Men.

And here, by the Way, let no Man wonder, when I talk of Epiſcopal Miniſters now preaching in the Church of *Scotland*, left that

that lead me to enquire farther, and come to examine the mighty Charge of Perſecution, openly, tho' perfectly falſe, and without Ground laid to the Church of *Scotland*; while to this Day, a great Number of the old Epiſcopal Miniſters, who retain their Principles, and neither ſubmit to Church or State, who refuſe to own the Church, or take the Oaths to the Government; who neither pray for the QUEEN, nor acknowledge the QUEEN, yet ſtill keep their Beings, and are the very ſame Pariſh Miniſters they were before.

Indeed I ſhall endeavour to do the Church of *Scotland* this Piece of Juſtice diſtinctly, in the Proceſs of theſe Papers, but I am not come to that yet.

For the Point now before me, it cannot, I ſay, be ſuppos'd, that any of theſe Gentlemen, who uſe the Lords Prayer from the remaining Principle of their old Epiſcopal Orders, ſhould be meant by our Slanderer, for the Reaſon given for it will by no means ſuit them—In ſhort, the thing being not only poſitively falſe in Fact, but altogether without the leaſt Ground to frame it upon; not the leaſt Room for the Suggeſtion, no Sence in it, no Wit in it, but a mere naked Forgery of his own malicious Head; it only remains for the Reverend Author, if he is Maſter of ſo much Grace, to bluſh at it, acknowledge his Error, and recant it; which till he is pleas'd to do, it cannot be unjuſt to give this Notice to all that hear him, that they ſhould ſhow juſt the ſame Regard to the Verity of every thing elſe he is pleas'd to ſay.

The Policy of theſe Methods, I confeſs, ſeems to me to be the moſt myſterious of all the reſt; and what it is, theſe Gentlemen can propoſe to themſelves in it, is very hard to determine, unleſs it be that they imagine, no body will concern themſelves to detect the Falſities and notorious Abuſes, they thus put upon the World— For what can a Man be ſuppos'd to obtain either on Party or People in telling a Story, which being ſpread abroad and believ'd for a Week or for a Month, and the like, muſt be, as certain as the Return of the Day, expos'd, detected and diſapprov'd afterwards, with all the Reproach and Scandal imaginable—I have heard of ſome Men, who have affronted others on purpoſe to be made ask their Pardons, of which Number a Member of a certain *P*—*t* was ſuſpected to be one; but I never before this heard of any that ever told an Untruth in publick, on purpoſe to be prov'd a L—r; and yet this ſeems as near to that Kind of Practice, as ever I met with any thing in my Life.

How could this Gentleman imagine, but ſome or other would have Kindneſs enough for *Scotland* to ſend thither, to enquire into the Truth of his new invented Slander? How could he ſuppoſe, but ſomebody would be met with, that would know ſomething of the Matter as well as himſelf? He certainly either thought himſelf ſecure from the Enquiry, and believ'd this would be accepted, *Verbo Sacerdotis*, or elſe he thought the Pleaſure of telling a very malicious Lye would ballance the Shame of being detected in it; or elſe he thought— What, ſays the next Reader? Truly Sir, nothing at all; or to put it into better *Engliſh*, did not think at all; For no Man that could be guilty of thinking, could be guilty of thinking ſo abſurdly, much leſs of acting ſo ridiculouſly.

I might be very merry with his Reverence here about the Word FORGIVE; they omit the 5*th* Petition, becauſe they won't forgive their Epiſcopal Brethren; and indeed, Sir, in the firſt Place, your Epiſcopal Brethren in *Scotland* will not forgive you, if they ſhould hear of it—Pray, Sir, how come you ſo openly to acknowledge the Epiſcopal Party in *Scotland* has offended the Presbyterian? For if you blame theſe for not forgiving, you muſt acknowledge the other to be offending, for which I preſume they will con you no Thanks.

I do co confeſs, that ſince my coming into the *North* of *Britain*, and that I have enquired into the Particulars of the Behaviour of the Epiſcopal Government, both Church and State, their Treatment of the Presbyterians, and the bloody Ages the latter went thro' under them for about 28 Years: I can think nothing more ſtrange, than that Fleſh and Blood can be brought to forgive ſuch things; and I cannot enough applaud the Moderation and Temper of the People in *Scotland*, notwithſtanding all that has been

ſaid

ſaid on that Subject, in their gentle and Chriſtian Behaviour to thoſe People, who were before their Proſecutors, their Murtherers, their unſufferable Tyrants; and were it not that I am wholly enclin'd to bury Reſentments on all ſides, and have dedicated theſe Papers to the particular Office of perſwading to Peace, Union, and mutual Affection of all Parties; I ſhould for a long Time make it mere Martyrology or Journal of the bloody Perſecutions, Sufferings and intollerable Uſage of the Presbyterians in *Scotland*, under the Cruelty and Tyranny of Epiſcopacy and Arbitrary Power.

And ſhould the black Lifts of the Sufferers in thoſe Times be ſhown to the World, it would no more be thought hard, that the preſent Generation ſhould reſent it to the extremeſt Degree; and nothing can be equally wonderful, but to think with what Lenity, Temper and Moderation, the preſent Eſtabliſhment, both in Church and State, has carry'd it towards them, ſince the Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Adminiſtration has been reſtored; of which I ſhall yet take Occaſion to ſpeak at large.

MISCELLANEA.

BUT what if the *French* will fight now, ſays my Letter—And what if all your Reaſons for your Opinion ſhould be no Reaſons to them; and the next News we have, or the next News that comes before your Paper can come out, now you are at ſuch a Diſtance, ſhould be of a Fight, a general Battle?

Well, Gentlemen, my Anſwer will be as direct as my Opinion was before, THEY WILL BE BEATEN. If *Pharoah* will venture into the Red Sea, his Chariot Wheels will be pull'd off, and he ſhall be drowned; In all human Probability, if the Battle be upon equal Terms, as to Place and Numbers, the *French* will be undone: I ſpeak now as to human Affairs, Heaven alone is the Giver of Victory; but as human Means is to be us'd to obtain it, ſo by human Probabilities only a Judgment is to be made of it.

And if there were nothing but the Superiority of the Troops on either ſide, I believe, I am juſtify'd in making this Determination.

I'll allow, that by the News from *Spain*, and the *Rhine*, and the extraordinary Conduct of the *French* Officers, who are, without Queſtion, as good as any in the World; the Spirits of the Soldiery are revived, and the general Conſternation, they were in, is abated; yet there is certainly a viſible Difference even in the common Soldiers —— The *French* Infantry, without the Mixture of *Germans*, *Swiſs*, and ſeveral other Nations, are allow'd by all the World to be inferiour in Goodneſs to the Confederates, and if it were only in mere Strength of Body, are not able to ſtand when they come to cloſe, when they come to a Shock; what their Horſe may do, is allow'd to be as much as Men can do. but yet we have ſeen them twice torn to pieces by the Confederate Cavalry.

I'll allow alſo, that the preſent Army in *Flanders* is the Flower of the whole Kingdom of *France*, the choiceſt Troops, and under the beſt Generals the King of *France* has left, and are able to do all that can be expected. —But I believe, the *French* themſelves will allow the Confederate Army as now modelled, both for the Men and Horſes, and particularly their Encouragement as Soldiers, ſuch as Pay, Cloathing, &c. beſides their being fluſh't with Victory on one hand, and the contrary on the other; I ſay, I believe, the *French* themſelves will allow them to be ſuperiour.

If therefore they fight, *I ſay as before*, without either ſome manifeſt Advantage or ſome unexpected Neceſſity— I am miſtaken; and if they do fight, I am out of all Fear but they will beaten.

If

If my Enquirer had ask'd me, what would have been the Conſequence of a Victory in *Flanders*, what the *French* would be able to do after ſuch another Victory over them, as that at *Ramellies*, he had put me Work enough to do, and I might have fill'd your Heads with things, that I rather wiſh, than expect to ſee come to paſs?

But this may be touch'd upon, and this confirms my Opinion of their Reſolutions not to fight; that really to riſe the whole Fate of the *French* Empire is ſtak't upon the next Battle, and *France* can no more ſtand upon its own Feet after ſuch another Defeat, than *England* could reſiſt *William* the Conqueror after the Battle at *Haſtings*, or at *Battell near Haſtings*.

I will not enter into an Enquiry, what a certain Prince may do, who ſome People think ſtands idly by with 50000 Men, and does nothing, only to ſee which Way theſe things may turn: But this I may ſay, another *Ramellies* muſt ſink the Power of *France* for ever, if that Prince does not ſtep to ſave it by a Peace; in which upon a plenary Reſtoration of their ill-gotten and ill manag'd Acceſſions, that Monarch may be reduc'd to a perfect Incapacity of offering any more Violence, either to his own Subjects, or to his Neighbours.

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